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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of: **YAMAJI, et al.**

Group Art Unit: **3679**

Serial No.: **09/437,296**

Examiner: **DUNWOODY, Aaron M.**

Filed: **November 9, 1999**

P.T.O. Confirmation No.: 7789

For: **FLUID COUPLING**

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

April 27, 2006

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated **February 10, 2006**, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1 as unpatentable over **Nakazawa et al.** (previously applied) in view of U.S. Patent 5,058,935 to Eidsmore (hereafter, "**Eidsmore**").

As noted in Applicants' response of June 14, 2005, FIG. 2 of **Nakazawa et al.** shows "a seal portion 18 of common construction (not shown in detail) interposed" between first and second fluid coupling members, as disclosed in column 4, lines 22-24. The "seal portion" appears to include an O-ring gasket, but FIG. 2 of **Nakazawa et al.** fails to show any part of the "seal portion" which corresponds to "gasket holding annular ridges on butting end faces thereof", as recited in claim 1 and as represented by members 71a, 72a in FIG. 1(b) of the instant application.

Furthermore, it should be noted that in the prosecution of the corresponding European Application 99122292.8, claim 1 was allowed over the prior art of record with the inclusion of the following language into claim 1 via amendment:

> ... that the gasket holding ridges are in contact with the gasket at its radial midportion and accordingly the inner peripheral portion of the gasket is free of stress concentration and therefore develops no wrinkles.

This limitation is supported on page 10, lines 17-22 of the specification of the instant application.

The "seal portion" in **Nakazawa et al.** fails to be rounded so as to be in contact with the gasket only at its radial midportion, as are the ridges 71a, 72a in FIG. 1(b) of the instant application, and as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

The Examiner has cited **Eidsmore** for teaching this feature.

Applicants respectfully disagree. FIG. 5 of **Eidsmore** shows rounded ("hemispherical") bead-like protrusions arranged on end faces 26' of coupling components 12', 14'. However, these protrusions are arranged to contact an inner portion of the gasket, and not the radial midportion, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

Furthermore, FIG. 5 of **Eidsmore** shows the inner diameter of the gasket to be approximately equal to the diameter of the opening passageway. This is in contrast to the present invention, in which the gasket (73) has an inside diameter less than the diameter of the opening passageway, as shown in FIG. 1(b), as disclosed on page 8, lines 10-12 of the specification, and as recited in claim 1, as originally filed, of the present invention.

Lastly, it should be noted that the arrangement of **Eidsmore** produces dead spaces, which are not present in the claimed invention because the end faces of the cylindrical projection 71 (72) are brought into contact with the gasket 73, as shown in Reference Figures A, B attached hereto.

In view of the aforementioned remarks, claim 1 is in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure: Reference Figures A. B

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